

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 3, 2011

The Honorable Patrick Donahoe  
Postmaster General, CEO  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Washington, DC 20260-0010

Dear Mr. Postmaster General:

I write in response to your July 26, 2011 letter about the U.S. Postal Service's (USPS) plan to conduct studies of Post Offices, stations, and branches nationwide to determine whether to close or convert these locations into alternate access points. I wish to focus particularly on the 20 facilities located in North Carolina.

During this period of fiscal restraint, I appreciate USPS's efforts to balance cost-cutting measures with the challenge of providing affordable, secure, and dependable postal services across the country as authorized by Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the U.S. Constitution, often referred to as *the postal clause*. However, as the process of reviewing each postal location in North Carolina begins, I strongly urge the USPS to ensure that each affected community receives a robust and fair opportunity to participate in the process and to provide input and feedback. Accordingly, the USPS should consider fully, and with an open mind, these community comments and concerns when making a final decision with respect to each location. I will personally follow the process very closely at each location and members of my staff will attend community meetings all across North Carolina on my behalf.

As you know, Post Offices provide communities with more than just stamps and package pick-up services. Many Post Office locations are gathering centers and lifelines for the communities they serve. This is especially true for our rural communities in North Carolina, which seem to bear the brunt disproportionately of each economic challenge the nation encounters, including the current downturn.

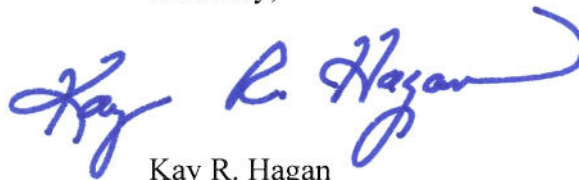
Phillip F. Rubio, a former mail carrier in Raleigh and Durham, and now an assistant professor of history at North Carolina A&T State University in my hometown of Greensboro, captured these important cultural and economic aspects of the Postal Service quite well in a July 29 *Washington Post* opinion piece: "Almost one-fifth of my customers received Social Security checks, and many of them relied on me to deliver their medications. ... What I didn't fully appreciate until later was the reassurance they got from seeing their letter carrier and the connection I represented to the Postal Service and the federal government. For them, the post office was also quite likely a place where a relative had found employment – enabling a middle-class lifestyle, homeownership and college tuition for the kids."

I appreciate you bringing this matter to my attention and look forward to maintaining an open dialogue with the USPS on this critical issue for communities all across North Carolina. Please have your staff contact Tracy Zvenyach of my staff at (202) 224-6342 with any questions or requests for information and with the dates, times and locations for upcoming USPS/community meetings in North Carolina.

I would also appreciate speaking with you personally before any decisions are made on the North Carolina locations.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kay R. Hagan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Kay R. Hagan  
United States Senator